

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

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SUPPLEMENT TO
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1. A rebellious younger group within the Austrian People's Party (OeVP), headed by POLCAR, Acting Chairman of the People's Party in Vienna, and ZIMM, has organized itself as a new youth movement; the group was originally to be called the Junge Front or Junge Union and was to be an affiliate of the OeVP though not a part of it. The name Kriegsgeneration (War Generation) has been used loosely to designate the young Austrian former soldiers, especially ex-Nazis, whom it was intended to attract, as well as the youth movement nucleus.

2. The aim of this movement was avowedly to woo former Nazis for election purposes. The new organization was originally to have been launched at the OeVP Convention on 19-22 May in Vienna. Knowing the extreme right-wing tendencies prevalent among instigators of the War Generation and fearing repercussions at the convention, the OeVP leadership resolved on 9 May 1949 to create a special "Department (Referat) for the War Generation." This department was supposed to study political problems inherent in the organizing of "the war generation" and eventually activate sometime during the summer a new youth movement along the lines indicated.

3. Creation of the department was a device to avoid a show-down at the OeVP convention. Appointment of a leader for the new department has been hitherto left open. FINGITZER, a former Nazi lecturer (Gauschulungsredner) from Vienna has been considered; Graf Ernst STRACHWITZ, who on 30 April 1949 became OeVP Provincial Youth Leader for Styria, has also been mentioned. In all probability, somebody selected by STRACHWITZ will be appointed, since STRACHWITZ himself has repeatedly stated that he will not cross the Soviet demarcation line. Since the head of the new department will automatically be a member of the Supreme OeVP Council, some STRACHWITZ supporters in Graz consider that STRACHWITZ may change his mind. If STRACHWITZ dominates the Department for the War Generation, POLCAR will undoubtedly head the new youth movement. The present newspaper of the OeVP Youth Movement, Ruf der Jugend, will possibly be turned over to the Department for the War Generation and become its organ and that of the new youth movement, possibly under a new name. If this is done, the paper will be taken away from the OeVP Youth Movement on the ground that it is losing money. Before the Department for the War Generation was created, Austrian Minister of Education Dr. Felix HURDES tried desperately but unsuccessfully to have the rebel youth movement incorporated within the OeVP Youth Movement.

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4. The background of this problem is a growing discord within the OeVP over the means to make sure of the Nazi vote in the coming Austrian elections. An intellectual group, which includes HURLIS, Chancellor Leopold FIGL, and OeVP editor Dr. Alfred HISSONG, believes that Nazi voters will not be won over by current OeVP propaganda, and that undisguised overtures in this direction would alienate rather than attract them. This group feels that the ex-Nazis will naturally turn to the League of Independents (the new party of Herbert KRAUS), and fears that overt wooing of the Nazi vote might give the Soviets an excuse to obstruct the elections or withhold official recognition. Furthermore, this group considers that most potential Nazi voters, except for some former Wehrmacht officers, have only contempt for those former Nazi leaders who are now collaborating with the OeVP.

5. STRACHWITZ and his followers represent a strongly rightist trend with definite neo-Nazi inclinations. Although they are supported by State Secretary Ferdinand GRAF, Alfons GOEBACH, OeVP Party Chairmen for Styria, and other OeVP leaders, source has heard members of STRACHWITZ' entourage openly declare that they are joined with the OeVP solely to obtain influential jobs for themselves. It is possible, according to source, that wrangling within the OeVP over the policy to be adopted toward the ex-Nazis may increase progressively, though probably the question will not come to a head until after the elections.

6. There is some evidence that the Austrian Communist Party (KPOe) is keeping well-informed on all OeVP efforts to win the Nazi vote. Herbert STIMMA, Secretary of the Freie Oesterreichische Jugend (FOeJ), was able to give source a detailed account of such efforts to date and indicated that the KPOe was preparing a propaganda protest on the subject which would be even more effective than propaganda aimed at the next wage-price agreement.

7. As previously stated, Chancellor FIGL and other members of the OeVP steering committee had originally wished to postpone consideration of the War Generation question in the interest of Party harmony; nevertheless, the issue came up in violent form at the OeVP convention in Vienna. State Secretary GRAF had previously invited representatives of the War Generation to attend the convention after obtaining provisional permission to do so from FIGL on the ground that the War Generation representatives would be present only in the capacity of observers. GRAF then saw to it that a representative of the War Generation was installed in each of the ten committees into which the work of the convention was divided. At GRAF's orders these representatives were entered on the official list of OeVP delegates, bracketed together with representatives of the OeVP Youth Movement, although the latter had not been consulted. According to source, this procedure is contrary to Party regulations and was adopted as a device to further GRAF's faction. Even GOEBACH, POLCAR, ZINK, and Nationalist Josef HANS (who is in charge of foreign relations of the youth movement), were convinced that GRAF had given undue prominence to the War Generation representatives. Since the Department for the War Generation had been created by the Party on 9 May 1949 and had been given no further publicity, delegates at the convention were surprised to find official recognition for the group on the convention program.

8. On the morning of 20 May 1949 the War Generation delegates held a secret meeting in which they drew up resolutions for subsequent presentation to the Political Committee. While the first three points were of a general nature, the fourth point was that the Department for the War Generation was to be represented in the steering committee of every OeVP organization (Korperschaft). The fifth point was that a new State Secretary was to be set up in the Austrian Government, presumably under the Ministry of the Interior, to deal with questions affecting former Nazis, and Dr. Franz GOSCHALL was to be its head. The War Generation delegates also decided to present to the General Assembly of the convention a new list of candidates to head the Party as follows:

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Party Chairman	State Secretary GRAF instead of FIGL
General Secretary	Friedolin SCHOLPF, People's Party Chairman of Upper Austria, instead of HUELS
Organizational Director	POLCAR instead of GRAF
Head of the Economic Policy Section	Stadtret. Dr. Eugen MARGARETTE instead of Dr. Anton WILMANN
Head of the Social Policy Section	Nationalrat Irwin ALTENBURGER instead of Dr. BOCK
Head of the Personnel Section	Nationalrat GSCHWITZER instead of ALTENBURGER

9. When the Political Committee met on the evening of 20 May 1949, the War Generation delegates attempted to push through their resolutions and their new list of candidates with the support of GORBACH. Neither proposal was accepted, however, because of strong opposition led by August KAMILL, Deputy Provisional Governor of Lower Austria, and Nationalrat Viktor KUELLNER. PINGITZER also suggested to the committee that a post of General Deputy Secretary be created to relieve FIGL of the strain of carrying on Party work in addition to his official duties. (While this is in itself an excellent idea, source feels that it was presented so that the War Generation could attempt to capture this post.) After their program had been defeated, War Generation delegates telephoned Count STRACHWITZ and urged him to come to Vienna. Despite his previous statement that he would not cross the demarcation line, he arrived on the morning of 21 May 1949 with a membership card, an invitation, and a voting book which had been obtained for him by Engr. MONOKUTIT, secretary to GORBACH, by order of GRAF.

10. The War Generation had planned to carry its campaign for official recognition from the Political Committee to the entire convention; after defeat in committee meeting, they still planned an appeal to the convention to authorize their forming themselves as a Zweckverband (an organization with a special program affiliated with the OeVP but including non-OeVP members). It proved impossible, however, to obtain the requisite fifty signatures without which the organizational committee, in accordance with its rules, could not admit the proposals to the convention agenda. STRACHWITZ, accordingly, had a meeting with GORBACH on the evening of 21 May, and the following strategy was planned: POLCAR, i.e. GRILLER, who has a Nazi background, and STRACHWITZ, planned to request the floor following the report of the organizational committee. Their idea was to force a vote with the assistance of GRAF who was to move that the convention endorse the War Generation group by acclamation. But the War Generation proposals had alarmed and offended many leaders of the OeVP Youth Movement, which is predominantly anti-Nazi, so that in the actual meeting, at which GORBACH was chairman, a lively discussion arose after POLCAR, GRILLER and STRACHWITZ had all made their speeches. GRAF ultimately realized that the recognition of the War Generation could not be pushed through the convention, and moved that War Generation problems be submitted to a five-man OeVP committee consisting of GRAF, POLCAR, SCHOLPF, HANS and GRILLER.*

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* [REDACTED] Comment: It will be apparent that the present report, while dealing with the same circumstances as those discussed in a report emanating from another agency, nevertheless presents a different interpretation. According to the document in question, the eminence grise behind the STRACHWITZ group is ex-Minister without Portfolio and Vice-Mayor of Vienna Lois WEINBERGER, rather than State Secretary GRAF, as suggested here. The present report also links GORBACH with the War Generation group instead of among its foes.)

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